

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5887

As of February 19, 2009

Title: An act relating to implementing a proposed constitutional amendment to change school levy election timing provisions.

Brief Description: Implementing a proposed constitutional amendment to change school levy timing provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Parlette and Tom.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/19/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Brandon Roché (786-7405)

Background: The Washington State Constitution gives school districts the power to levy additional taxes beyond the 1 percent limit on property tax. These excess levies may be authorized on a two through four year basis for school support or two through six years for capital improvements. In 2008 a constitutional amendment was passed allowing for a simple majority vote in order to pass an excess levy for a school district.

School districts may submit a levy proposition to the voters at a special or regular election but not more than twice in 12 months and not more than 12 months prior to the inception of the levy.

Summary of Bill: School districts may submit a levy to voters not more than 18 months prior to the inception of the levy tax.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 11, 2009.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2010, if the proposed amendment to Article VII, section 2 of the State Constitution is approved.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: We would like school districts to have the option to run November levies. The idea is to allow school districts operating on a September to September schedule to approve levies in the November election prior to the school year. This would save money for school districts if they were able to do this.

OTHER: We've been speaking with bond counsel about some of the unintended consequences of this bill. Bond counsel believes this can be done without a constitutional amendment. There is also a concern that the clause calling for levies to not be run more than twice in an 18-month period is a concern. We just want to make sure this is done the right way.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Parlette, prime sponsor.

OTHER: Dan Steele, Washington State School District Association.